

Documents on Diplomacy: Lessons

"Give Space a Chance"

Standard: I. Culture
II. Time, Continuity, and Change
III. People, Places, and Environments
V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
VII. Production, Distribution, and Consumption
VIII. Science, Technology, and Society
IX. Global Connections
X. Civic Ideals and Practices

Grade Level: 9–12 (futurist thinking and homework)

Objectives: The student will:

- View cartoon clips on the work of astronauts and discuss ideas involved
- Review a space treaty and rescue documents and explain what is missing in terms of futuristic thinking beyond 1968
- Rewrite the rescue treaty to include an additional article that fixes the problems of the first treaty, then vote (UN-style) to determine the best entry
- Project the needs of future space rescue in their own cartoons

Time: 2 class periods

Materials: Documents: **1967** *The Outer Space Treaty*
1968 *Agreement on the Rescue and Return of Astronauts*

Resources: *Cartoon Blank: Give Space a Chance*

Access to internet in classroom or computer lab:

- http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/42907356/ns/technology_and_science-space/t/how-americas-first-astronaut-got-it-done/#. TlrcKHPT7-E
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YRnxA9CMKCs> (cartoon Imaginext)
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AP8P-GRqi08>
- <http://www.space.com/spaceflight/>
- <http://www.space.com/12196-nasa-final-space-shuttle-sts135-rescue-plan.html>

Procedures:

Setting the Stage

After a debate lasting several years, UN delegates agreed in 1967 to a treaty governing international activity in space. The very next year another agreement followed—this time on rescuing astronauts and objects from space ventures. By 1968, the Mercury and Apollo missions had managed many successful sea rescues, but mission controllers did not know what the future would bring as space exploration and travel moved forward.

Although the agreements have been criticized for vague language open to different interpretations, they are still in effect today. As of April 2009, 90 nations have ratified the treaty, another 24 nations and two international organizations (the European Space Agency and the European Organization for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites) have signed it.

Students do enjoy the lure of outer space and websites are included for further research. Many youth still see astronauts as heroes and are interested in careers with NASA.

Pre-Lesson

1. Download any of the cartoon movie clips suggested and prepare for projection in some format.
2. Suggest that students watch at home any of the “Lonely Astronaut” cartoons (on Youtube), which were created by a team of young film “engineers.” The cartoons are funny—but the lonely astronaut who has been left on the moon despite many rescue attempts does get angry and uses some questionable (bleeped) language— best to watch them at home.
3. Have these terms written on board or ready for projection:
 - Space Tourist
 - Spacecraft/Center Personnel
 - Hubble Telescope Rescue
 - MIR
 - International Space Station
 - Cost of Rescue
 - Columbia Shuttle Disaster

and any other rescue situations that have arisen since 1968.

Day One

1. As students arrive begin any two cartoon clips of astronaut rescues; some clips have aliens with mechanical robots going after astronauts.

- 2.** Ask students if they still dream of going into outer space and what could they do if they got lost out there. Use a “futures scenario” type discussion. Also, ask what they thought of the Lonely Astronaut. The discussion will be interesting.
- 3.** Show the MSNBC clip of the early sea rescues of astronauts and discuss what would be needed in a rescue plan if an astronaut had landed in the territorial waters of another country.
- 4.** Distribute the document, *The Outer Space Treaty*, and ask students to read and mark points of interest, as well as any rescue plans. What is missing?
- 5.** Distribute the document, *Agreement on the Rescue and Return of Astronauts*. Again, direct them to make note of anything interesting and ask them what is still missing from this agreement.
- 6.** Pair the students and have them study their notes to discover what is missing, then have them write an additional “Article 11” to cover what they noted, as well as:
 - Space Tourist
 - Spacecraft/Center Personnel
 - Hubble Telescope Rescue
 - MIR
 - International Space Station
 - Cost of Rescue
 - Columbia Shuttle Disaster

and any other post-1968 rescue situations you may have already identified.

- 7.** Collect all versions of “Article 11” and save them to be debated and voted into passage during the next class period.
- 8.** Distribute the cartoon pages, one set (two pages) for each student, and assign for homework a visit to the website, www.space.com, to learn about current activity in space to get some ideas for discussion and cartooning. At the next class, they will be asked to create a modern cartoon about 2011 space rescue and they need to think about how their characters and action will fit into six (6) cartoon frames.

Pre-Lesson for Day Two

- 1.** Type the different versions of “Article 11” into a handout for discussion. Do NOT include student names to identify any of the articles.
- 2.** Arrange the desks in an open-forum style and place a copy of the “Article 11” handout on each desk.

Day Two

1. Allow students to sit where they wish. Ask for a volunteer or a series of volunteers to conduct the debate on which version of "Article 11" should be added to the rescue agreement.
2. Allow the debate to continue as long as students have legitimate ideas; then call for nominations of the best versions, followed by a vote, to choose the best Article 11.
3. Ask students to group their desks together (in any fashion) and then spend the rest of the class period finishing up their *Give Space a Chance* cartoons. These cartoons should show creatively the past, the present, and/or the future of things to come.
4. Collect the cartoons at the end of class, review the work, and post for students to see at the next class period.

Extension Activities:

1. Depending on level of student interest, show this very good video on the Hubble rescue plans.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YRnxA9CMKCs> *Hubble's Amazing Rescue*
2. Students could create their own version of the "Lonely Astronaut" with a different title and *language appropriate for school* to be shared with each other and voted on for an Outer Space Academy Award. ■